



Workforce Update

Latest information on hospitals' attraction and retention of talent:

May 6, 2004

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1. Incumbent Workforce Grants Awarded

The Research and Educational Foundation of the Ohio Hospital Association has awarded \$1.2 million to Ohio hospitals for incumbent worker training programs through a grant from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Thirty-one Ohio hospitals will receive funding through the grant, which is aimed at helping hospitals work toward overcoming health care personnel shortages by training current employees in key shortage areas.

The initial award letters have been sent to hospital CEOs and the designated grant coordinators and a list of hospitals receiving funding is available online at <http://www.ohanet.org/workforce/traininggrant.pdf>. OHA thanks all applicants and congratulates grant recipients. The selection process was very competitive and the proposals received by OHA highlight the extensive measures hospitals are taking to solve workforce shortages.

For those interested in or involved with writing grants for hospitals, OHA is offering a grantwriting track at the Annual Meeting on June 14 at the Columbus Convention Center. To learn more about this educational opportunity, visit

www.ohanet.org/annualmeeting/default.asp.

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2. New Overtime Rules Finalized

The U.S. Department of Labor this week issued its final regulations governing overtime eligibility under the Fair Labor Standards Act, intended to clarify which "white collar" workers are entitled to overtime pay. The new "FairPay" rules guarantee overtime protections to workers earning \$23,660 per year or less, and clarify that licensed practical nurses and similar health care workers generally are entitled to overtime pay. In addition, the final regulations retain previous laws regarding the overtime rights of registered nurses, meaning if they are eligible for overtime now they likely will remain so, said Carla Luggiero, AHA senior associate director for federal relations. For more on the final regulations, visit www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/whd/fairpay/main.htm.

AHA News Now 4/20/04

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3. Nurse Execs Voice Opposition to Nurse Overtime Bill

Nurse executives and other hospital advocates from around the state have stepped up their efforts to defeat legislation, House Bill 382, sponsored by Rep. John Widowfield (R-Cuyahoga Falls), which would prohibit a hospital from requiring a nurse to work more than an agreed to, predetermined schedule.

The bill was introduced at the request of the Ohio Nurses Association, a nurse's union that claims hospitals regularly implement overtime requirements as a staffing tool. The OHA Board of Trustees as well as the board of the Ohio Organization for Nurse Executives have taken positions to oppose HB 382 because it could threaten the safety and well being of patients.

In an effort to bolster hospital's grassroots advocacy efforts, OHA created a House Bill 382 Work Group, comprised of nurse executives whose state representatives serve on the House Health and Family Services Committee, which is considering the legislation. The nurse executives who serve on the work group have generated dozens of letters from CEOs, board members and other employees at their facilities and are scheduling in-district meetings with their lawmakers for an in-depth discussion on the negative implications on patient safety of the legislation. OHA Advocacy Report 4/23/04

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4. Department of Labor Awards Grant

The U.S. Department of Labor has awarded 13.5 million in grants for health care job training under an initiative launched to help prepare workers for critical health care jobs. The grants are part of the president's High Growth Job Training Initiative to prepare workers for job opportunities in high growth sectors such as health care. For more on the funded programs, go to www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/opa/OPA2004655.a.htm.

Berger Health System was acknowledged by the Department of Labor through an ETA high growth job training grant. It is also one of 19 models and demonstration health sector grants awarded throughout the country. The grant validates Berger's commitment to being a leader and national model with this program, the real winners of the grant

and training process are the employees and community participants. (AHA News Now 4/20/04, The Columbus Dispatch 5/2/04)

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5. Additional Grants Announced by HRSA

The Health Resources and Services Administration has announced a new competitive grant program for awards in fiscal year 2004. The grants include \$4.8 million for the Nurse Faculty Loan Program which provides loans to nursing students pursuing advance degrees to teach nursing. Also included is \$400,000 for the Health Careers Adopt a School Demonstration program, to develop model partnerships between community-based organizations, schools and health professionals that expose underrepresented minority and disadvantaged students to health careers. For more on the grants see the *Federal Register* at www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/a04/0420c.htm. (AHA News Now 4/20/04)

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6. Hospitals Encouraged to Partner

The U.S. Department of Labor is soliciting applications from state and local workforce investment boards (WIB) and faith-based and community organizations for grants in the amount of \$6.5 million that will be used to prepare people for jobs in high-growth fields such as health care. Hospitals are not eligible for the grants, but are encouraged to participate as partners in the grant projects. For more information on Ohio's WIB check the listing at www.nawb.org/asp/wibdir2.asp?state=OH or www.odh.state.oh.us/ODHPrograms/HCFORCE/taskfce1.htm or contact local faith-based and community organizations to find out if they are applying. (AHA News Now 4/12/04)

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7. AHA and ASHHRA Honored

The American Hospital Association (AHA) and the American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration were honored at the National Association of Workforce Boards with the Industry Sector Recognition Awards honoring them as outstanding workforce board partners in the past year. Later this year AHA will roll out a toolkit on ways hospitals can partner with their state and local workforce investment boards in the area of health care training and employment. (AHA News Now 3/15/04)

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8. NIH Web Site Helps Students

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently launched a Web site designed to help middle and high school students explore the diversity of health care careers. The LifeWorks site features information on more than 100 health and medical careers. The site, created by NIH's Office of Science Education, also serves as a resource for parents, educators and school guidance and career counselors. It can be found at www.science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.

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9. Nurses Week Kudo

The *Columbus Dispatch* published its annual National Nurses Week insert on May 5 to recognize and promote the field of nursing. National Nurses week is May 6-12. Visit www.nursingworld.org for more information.

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10. Job of the Month
Respiratory Therapist

A respiratory therapist specializes in evaluating, treating and caring for patients with breathing disorders. He or she tests the capacity of the lungs and analyzes the oxygen and carbon dioxide concentration to determine deficiencies. He or she provides temporary relief to patients with chronic asthma or emphysema and may provide emergency care for heart failure, stroke, shock or drowning. Patients may range from premature infants whose lungs are not fully developed to the elderly whose lungs are diseased.

Duties include reviewing and collecting data to evaluate the appropriateness of prescribed respiratory care and selecting, assembling and checking all equipment used in providing respiratory care. He or she initiates and conducts therapeutic procedures and modifies prescribed therapeutic procedures to achieve a specific objective, maintains patient records and communicates relevant information to other members of the health care team, and assists the physician in performing special procedures in a laboratory procedure room or operating room.

Most educational programs for this career are two years and lead to an associate degree; some baccalaureate programs are available. There are two credentials available, approved through the National Board of Respiratory Care: Certified Respiratory Therapy Technician (CRTT) and Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT). The average starting salary is \$37,690 per year.

The employment outlook is expected to remain strong with openings in hospitals, long-term care, home health and rehabilitation centers.

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Workforce Update is a service of the Ohio Hospital Association
155 E. Broad St., FL 15, Columbus, OH 43215-3620
614-221-7614, 614-221-4771 (fax)
For more information contact
Susan Zabo susanz@ohanet.org
or
Jean Scholz jeans@ohanet.org

Visit us on the Web at:
www.ohanet.org/workforce/

